

## Historic, archived document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.



JUN 28 1932  
U. S. Department of Agriculture

HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Wednesday, June 29, 1932

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "Vegetable Cookery." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, and the Bureau of Animal Industry, U. S. D. A.

So many things to talk about today. I don't know where to start. What do you say? Shall we begin with the menu?

The menu is inspired by two recent letters. A lady who lives in a small town near me is very fond of vegetable meals. She has written for some new vegetable plate menus. Another friend has asked for a different way to fix egg plant. As I said, those two letters are responsible for the menu today. It's a vegetable plate dinner featuring French fried egg plant.

Here's what we've planned for the vegetable plate: French fried egg plant; New green peas buttered; Spinach with poached egg and grated cheese; Crisp red radishes; and, for dessert, Raspberry flummery.

Of course, you know the essentials of a tempting vegetable plate. First, the vegetables have to be cooked thoroughly and seasoned, oh, so carefully. Then the plate has to look delicious. Contrast is important, contrast in color, flavor and texture. That's why our vegetable plate features different colors in food -- brown, green, white, yellow and red.

Now I'm going to tell you something that will make you feel just like Columbus. The recipe for French fried egg plant is brand new! It was invented just a day or so ago by the Recipe Lady and it has never appeared in public before. I thought you'd like to try this brand new recipe right away while it was still undiscovered country, as you might say. If you have your pencils on hand, here's your chance to take it down. Six ingredients for French fried egg plant:

1 medium-sized egg plant	1/4 teaspoon of salt
1 egg	Fine dry grated breadcrumbs
1 tablespoon of water	Fat for deep-fat frying

That makes six. I'll repeat that list. (Repeat.)

First pare the egg plant and cut it in strips about 1/2 inch wide and 3 inches long. Now beat the egg slightly and add the water and the salt. Dip the pieces of eggplant into the beaten egg and then roll each piece in the breadcrumbs. Let the strips stand an hour or longer to dry this egg-and-bread-crumbs coating. Now heat the fat in a deep kettle to about 365 degrees F.





Cook the egg plant about five minutes -- or until it is golden brown. Drain the pieces on paper and serve piping hot.

Doesn't it sound good?

Another important item on that vegetable plate was the spinach with poached egg. That's a different and delicious way to serve spinach or any other greens. First cook the greens and season them with salt, pepper and butter. Second poach the eggs. Then take a flat pan and spread the seasoned greens across the bottom. Set the poached eggs on top of the greens. Cover them sprinkle a mixture of grated cheese and bread crumbs. Set the dish in the oven just long enough for the cheese to melt and the crumbs to brown. Serve in the baking dish. This way of serving greens ought to make any vegetarian happy. And it's an excellent main dish for either lunch or dinner.

Now about the raspberry flummery. There's a summer pudding that deserves some hearty praise. It's a delicate and delicious fruit dessert. It's made of fruit juice thickened with cornstarch. (The best flavors for the purpose seem to be blackberry or raspberry.) It has a beautiful rosy color and a fine flavor. And, finally, it's easy to make and very inexpensive. You can use the juice from either canned or cooked berries for this pudding. It's served cold in sherbet cups with whipped cream or plain cream.

Flummery is a dish with a history. It's an old, old favorite, invented in Wales so long ago that there's no date to go with it. The early Welsh flummery, I'm told, was a sour dish made with oatmeal. I believe they still eat it over there. But I prefer my flummery thickened with cornstarch and flavored with fruit. Of course, you have to be very careful not to get too much cornstarch for a dish like this. It doesn't want to be stiff but must be thoroughly cooked. Flavor is the point.

There now. With dinner all decided and off our minds, we can continue the conversation on any subject we please.

After the way I've talked my head off about cooking vegetables properly all these recent years, I had an idea that every man, woman and child in the United States had probably heard the whys and wherefores of keeping the flavor and color as well as the vitamins and minerals in cooked vegetables. But I was much mistaken. Lately letters on this subject have been coming in as thick as spatter. So I guess we'd better consider vegetables once more today.

Whenever I see a man who turns up his nose at greens, who doesn't like peas and beans, who has no appetite for carrots and beets, who says salads are nonsense and vegetables in general are a waste of time -- whenever I see a man who has ideas like that, I become suspicious. Not of the man, but of his mother or his wife. I begin to suspect that the cook in his household when he was a child, or the person who is cooking for him at present didn't know how to fix vegetables so that they were delicious, so that they keep their natural flavor and tempting color. It's the way vegetables have been prepared --and abused--that built up the prejudice against them. There's nothing more unpleasant to my mind than a dish of strong, brownish cabbage cooked to a soft mass. But that same cabbage might have been delicious, delicate in flavor and texture and white and green in color. It makes a big difference whether you cook your cabbage five or thirty minutes. And it makes a big difference how you season your vegetables.



The best rule for cooking green vegetables is this: Drop the vegetable in a small quantity of boiling salted water, and cook, with the lid off the kettle, until just tender, not a minute longer. That applies to most other vegetables -- white, yellow and red. Certain vegetables, such as cabbage and cauliflower are likely to discolor and become strong if they are over-cooked. Yellow vegetables, fortunately, do not lose their pleasant bright color easily. But there's one point of difference when it comes to cooking red vegetables like beets or red cabbage. The red color is preserved by the addition of an acid such as vinegar, to the cooking water.

If you have a dog, you'll enjoy this verse a friend sent me the other day. She calls it "A Kennel Motto" and has tacked it up right above her small dog's living quarters.

Here's the verse:

"A well-bred Dog should bear in mind  
The foolishness of men, but seeing  
How well they mean, should still be kind  
To every poor dumb Human Being."

Speaking of dogs and cats, perhaps you have the problem of keeping them out of flower beds and shrubbery where they aren't wanted. The scientists have a solution for this difficulty. They say if you spray the flowers, shrubs or premises with a dilute nicotine sulphate spray, cats and dogs will avoid them. The spray is harmless to plants and is very offensive to animals. It is widely used against sucking insects. As cats and dogs have a keener sense of smell than humans, they can smell the spray even when you put it on so thinly that people are unaware of its presence.

Commercial preparations usually contain 40 per cent of nicotine sulphate. The scientists say to use such preparations at the rate of one and one-half teaspoonfuls to a gallon of water. The spray evaporates, so you'll want to put it on again after rains and about once every two weeks in ordinary weather.

Thursday: "Clothes for Traveling."

